



Health

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# TRACKS

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## Age 9 months

### *Greetings!*

Hello! Your baby is almost 9 months old, and he is becoming increasingly active. This means a taste of physical independence for baby and a challenge for you to keep him safe.

### *Your child's health care*

#### **Well-Child Check Ups:**

Now is the time for you to schedule and appointment for your baby's health check-up. If your child receives Minnesota Health Care programs insurance, remember to ask the clinic for a Child & Teen checkup for your child's 9 month checkup. Ask your healthcare provider if your infant needs fluoride.

**No immunizations are needed at 9 months unless your baby is behind schedule. If you have any questions, call your medical clinic or Countryside Public Health.**

### *Your growing child*

In the next 3 months you will notice that your baby may do some of the following:

- ♥ Pull himself to a standing position.
- ♥ Crawl forward or backward on hands and knees.
- ♥ Pick up a small object with thumb and forefinger.
- ♥ Say mama and dada and babble a lot.
- ♥ May not want to be separated from mom or dad.
- ♥ May be shy when meeting a stranger.
- ♥ Use a cup to drink.
- ♥ May start to walk.

#### **tip**

Let your baby feed himself. This gives him practice picking up small objects (dry cereal) and gives him experience with different textures in his hands and mouth.

**REMEMBER - Premature infants may**

**develop more slowly. Contact your doctor or Countryside Public Health if you have questions.**

## *Feeding your child*

At this time you may introduce "junior" foods. You may also add other soft foods such as puddings, mashed potatoes, yogurt, and gelatin.

- Introduce one new food  
waiting 4-5 days between starting another new food.
- Give him his own spoon and let him play with it at meal times.
- Offer liquids from a cup.
- Continue to keep mouth and teeth clean with a moist cloth or gauze.

**WIC is a program that provides nutrition education and special foods to pregnant and breastfeeding women, infants and children to age five.**

**Call 1-800-244-6026 to see if you are eligible to receive WIC Program benefits.**

## *Positive parenting*

- ♥ Pick your child up and direct him toward something he can play with rather than always saying no.
- ♥ Only say NO when your child is in real danger and remove him from the situation.
- ♥ Don't expect your child to learn from just one or two incidents. He has a short memory.
- ♥ Be consistent and immediate with your responses.
- ♥ Don't worry about spoiling your baby with attention.
- ♥ Read a story or play a game with your baby every day.
- ♥ Talk, smile, and sing to your child often.

## *Safety check*

To keep your baby safe:

- ✓ Use an approved car safety seat every time your baby is in the car. Continue rear facing until age 1 year and at least 20 pounds. Never leave your baby unattended in the car. Especially in summer, check car seat for "hot spots" (i.e. vinyl pads, metal parts) before placing baby in car seat.
- ✓ Always stay with your baby when he is in a high place, or near a bathtub, toilet, pail of water, wading pool, or any other water.
- ✓ Never leave hot food or hot liquids within reach of your infant. Never carry hot foods or liquids when near your baby or while holding your baby.
- ✓ Do not tie a pacifier around his neck.
- ✓ Check the temperature of bath water with your elbow.
- ✓ Always keep small objects out of the reach of your infant.

- ✓ Always keep sides of crib up.
- ✓ Keep all household chemical products and medicines put away in high places and out of sight and reach of your baby.
- ✓ Lock doors or use gates to stairways, driveways and storage areas. Use window guards on upper floors.
- ✓ Use safety catches on all drawers and cupboards.
- ✓ Keep handles turned inward on stove.
- ✓ Cover electric outlets with protective plastic caps.
- ✓ Learn CPR.
- ✓ Provide shoes that do not slip on floors.
- ✓ Have poison center number on phone. (1-800-222-1222)
- ✓ Remember to use sun screen when your child is outside.
- ✓ Test your home for radon. Call Countryside Public Health for information

### **tip**

Let your baby put different shaped objects into and out of containers. Give him plastic containers with large beads, blocks, or socks.

## *Common health concerns*

### **Croup:**

Some babies get an illness called croup. Croup is a swelling of the voice box and windpipe and causes the airway to shrink. Breathing becomes difficult and babies have a barking cough and/or hoarse cry.

Call your doctor if you think your baby has croup and watch his breathing! Go to the Emergency Room if:

- ♥ His breathing makes a loud whistling sound.
- ♥ He can not speak or cry.
- ♥ He struggles to breathe.

**Give baby non-aspirin medicine - no baby aspirin!**

## *Safety Tips- Second-Hand Child Car Seats*

Garage sales, secondhand/thrift stores and hand-me-downs may be an economical way to obtain a child car seat, but are not necessarily safe. To ensure that a child is traveling safely in a motor vehicle, here are important guidelines to follow when considering a second-hand child car seat:

- Ask the previous owner if the car seat has been secured in a motor vehicle during a crash or sustained any damage. If so, do not use the car seat. The car seat may have been damaged, and although the damage may not be visible, the safety of the car seat may have been compromised.

- **Ensure that the car seat is federally approved.** All car seats manufactured after January 1, 1981, must be federally approved. However, do not use a seat more than six years old; the plastic may have deteriorated. Federally approved car seats are crash tested and must meet federal motor vehicle safety standards. If the label stating the date of manufacture and model number is missing, don't use the seat. This information will enable you to be sure it is a federally approved seat and to check if it's been issued a safety notice or recall. It is also important to register the seat in your name with the manufacturer.

- **Ensure that the car seat has original manufacturer's instructions.** Do not use the car seat if it's missing the manufacturer's instructions. These are necessary to ensure proper usage and to determine whether or not the seat has all its original parts. Each car seat is different, and it is important to review the manufacturer's instructions to ensure that you understand how to use the car seat properly. When used properly, car seats are 70 percent effective in preventing fatalities and the need for hospitalization.

- **Ensure that the car seat has all of its original parts, such as a harness strap, shield or tether strap.** It is important to review the manufacturer's instructions to determine whether or not the car seat has all of its original parts. Check that the straps are not frayed and metal parts are not rusted. Certain parts, such as the car seat padding or chest clip, may be replaced without compromising safety, but it is still important to ensure that all parts are certified replacement parts for the make and model of the car seat and meet all applicable federal motor vehicle safety standards.

- **Ensure that the car seat fits in the vehicle and can be properly secured.** Not all car seats fit in all vehicles. It is important to try installing the seat before you plan to use it. The seat belts in the vehicle should be able to secure the seat properly; the seat should not move from side to side or back and forth. Check the vehicle owner's manual for instructions on where car seat can be placed in the car.

- **Ensure that the child fits into the car seat.** The car seat must also properly fit the child. The child must be correctly secured in the car seat every time she/he rides in the vehicle. Consult the manufacturer's instructions.

**For more information about child passenger safety contact your local Countryside Public Health office. The trained staff will be able to check your seat and help you install the seat so your child will be safe.**

**We hope you are finding our letters to be helpful. Please feel free to call Countryside Public Health if you would like more information.**

**We will be writing to you again before your baby is 12 months old. Enjoy your baby and the changes he is experiencing.**

**Countryside Offices**

**Swift County**

201 13th St. S. • Benson, MN 56215  
320-843-4546 or 1-800-657-3291

**Yellow Medicine County**

415 9th Avenue • Granite Falls, MN 56241  
320-564-3010 or 1-800-407-3628

**Chippewa County**

719 N. 7th St. • Suite 308 • Montevideo, MN 56265  
320-269-2174 or 1-800-894-0192

**Lac Qui Parle County**

600 6th Street • Madison, MN 56256  
320-598-7313 or 1-800-255-0736

**Big Stone County**

47 NW 2nd St. • Suite 104 • Ortonville, MN 56278  
320-839-6135 or 1-866-277-5587

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